

# Easement

S-426

Governor J. Millard Tawes Homeplace  
Crisfield  
Private

c. 1887, c. 1910-20

The J. Millard Tawes Homeplace is significant for several reasons. Historically, it was the boyhood home of J. Millard Tawes, governor of Maryland between 1959 and 1967. His other political achievements include Somerset Clerk of Court for a term of eight years, Maryland State Comptroller for seventeen years, Maryland State Banking Commissioner, and Chairman of the Maryland Board of Natural Resources.

Architecturally, the Tawes homeplace is a revealing example of how a house was gradually modified from a plain two-story center hall dwelling to a much grander structure with a colossal columned portico, bay windows, a porte cochere, and elaborate interior oak and mahogany woodwork. Stylistically, the house is an interesting mixture of late nineteenth century Queen Anne designs overlaid with the early twentieth century Colonial Revival.

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improvements. As a partner in the Tawes and Gibson Lumber Yard, the family had easy access to the building supplies shipped into Crisfield. Much of the interior woodwork, colored glass windows, and doors and windows would have been machine-made and imported from distant building supply manufacturers.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. S-426  
Magi No.  
DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic GOVERNOR J. MILLARD TAWES HOMEPLACE

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 25 Asbury Avenue ☐ not for publication

city, town Crisfield ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Somerset

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Paul Thornton  
George Coupe and Richard M. Osborn

street & number 110 Parsonage Street telephone no.:

city, town Fruitland state and zip code MD 21826

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County Clerk of Court liber ITP 398

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio 962

city, town Princess Anne state MD 21853

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. S-426

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Governor J. Millard Tawes Homeplace stands at 25 Asbury Avenue in Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland. The two-and-a-half story, three-bay center hall frame house faces south with the principal gable roof oriented on an east/west axis. A two-and-a-half story dining room/kitchen wing extends to the rear resulting in a tee-shaped house.

Built in stages beginning around 1887 and enlarged and/or remodeled during the early twentieth century (c. 1900-20), the oldest section of the structure is the center tee-shaped core. Beginning around 1900 and extending to 1920 were alterations that enlarged the original house. According to family member, Marvin H. Tawes, Sr., who grew up in the house, additions were made on a regular basis. The house was raised on a high foundation, bays were added to each gable end, the portico was attached to the front, and new woodwork was installed over the earlier moldings.

The exterior of the house is sheathed with a combination of weatherboard siding and fishscale shingles. Black asphalt shingles cover the roof. Part of the early twentieth century remodeling of the house included the addition of a porte cochere on the west side.

The south (main) facade is dominated by a colossal columned Ionic portico that extends the full height of the house, while single-story porches stretch to each side. The gable-front of the portico is sheathed with fishscale shingles, and the eaves are trimmed with brackets. A turned baluster handrail is fixed between the columns. The south wall of the house is a symmetrical three-bay elevation with a center, partially glazed door flanked by large single-pane windows topped by rectangular colored glass panels.

The east and west gable ends of the front block are three-sided bay pavilions pierced with single-pane sash windows. The upper eaves are trimmed with decorative sawnwork and the gable ends are covered with fishscale shingles.

Attached to the north side of the front block is the two-and-a-half story dining room/kitchen wing which has a porte cochere and turned post porch on the west side and a turned post porch on the east side. A combination of single-pane and two-over-two sash windows light the first and second floors. A double-gabled dormer, a later addition, defines the west slope of the roof, and a small single-pane sash attic windows pierce the gable ends. The porte cochere, supported on Tuscan columns, extends from a flat-roofed sunroom that abutts the dining room. The walls of the sunroom are largely glazed. Surrounding the balance of the rear wing is a single-story porch that is supported by triple sets of turned posts on the west side.

(continued)

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRUSTS  
DHCP/DHCP  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

Governor J. Millard Tawes Homeplace  
Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland  
Description continued

The interior as well as the exterior of the J. Millard Tawes Homeplace is currently under an extensive restoration with a high priority on saving as much of the original woodwork as possible. The interior of the house was remodeled during the early twentieth century (c. 1910) and not significantly changed since that time.

The center hall contains the principal stair with a turned balusters and square paneled newel posts supporting a molded handrail. Small rows of classical egg-and-dart and beaded moldings highlight the newel post panels. The closed stringer stair is paneled below the stringer, and a small closet is fixed under the first landing. A high molded baseboard trims the perimeter of the hall. Piercing the west wall of the hall is a wide opening which has a delicate spindle decoration framing a lyre shaped emblem, all within flanking Ionic columns.

The room to the right of the stairhall, the parlor, is entered through a five-panel pocket door. The squarish room with the three sided bay on the east end, has original woodwork including a corner mantel. During the removal of deteriorated plaster in this room, it was revealed that the corner mantel was installed over an earlier wallpapered surface. The mantel, probably ordered through a builders' supply catalogue, dates to the early twentieth century with its beveled glass mirror incorporated into the overmantel. Large console shaped pilasters resting on anthropomorphic footed bases, support an ogee molded mantel shelf that features an egg-and-dart bed molding. Also evident in the parlor is the shift in wall construction between the initial house and the three-sided bay addition.

The west room, probably used as a living room, is trimmed with early twentieth century door and window moldings and a high molded baseboard. At the time of survey, the living room mantel, was being relocated since it had been removed from the house. A large pocket door separates the living room from the rear wing dining room. The dining room mantel had been removed from the house with plans for its return as well.

The kitchen, the northern most room, has been stripped of all of its interior fabric in a plan to remodel it for future use. Serious structural problems in the kitchen required the removal and replacement of the floor.

The second floor of the front block survives with most of its woodwork. The simply molded trim, made of mahogany, includes a high baseboard and window and door surrounds. The door and window lintels have a small crown molding. The only mantel on the second floor is a survival from the 1880s house. Retaining a coat of reddish brown graining, the mantel consists of paired reeded columns with turned capitals. A reeded frieze is decorated with small button-like medallions.

The bedrooms in the rear wing are plainly finished notable details. Access to the attic is gained through steep ladder fixed in a closet at the head of the main stair. The attic is unfinished and clearly shows how the house has been altered with modifications to the roof. Remnants of red stained pine shingles remain on the kitchen bedroom roof.



of Maryland, in and for the City of Baltimore, duly commissioned and sworn, and authorized by law to administer oaths and take acknowledgments. I further certify that I am acquainted with the handwriting of the said Justice and truly believe the signature to be his genuine signature. In testimony whereof, I have set my hand and affix the seal of the Superior Court of Baltimore City, this 19<sup>th</sup> day of May A.D. 1886



as Bond, Clerk of the Superior Court of Baltimore City May the 28<sup>th</sup> day A.D. 1886, there was delivered unto me the subscriber the aforesaid Deed in order to be enrolled among the records of Somerset County, which said Deed together with the acknowledgment thereof, thereon endorsed and clerk certificate thereto attached, is accordingly enrolled among the same records in Liber No. 7. L. No. 4. folios 185 & 186 on the day and year aforesaid

Per H. Fillmore Langford Clerk

### Deed of Partition

George R. James, W. Wesley James & others  
from  
John P. James, Oliver C. James & others

This deed of six parts, made and executed by and between George R. James, W. Wesley James, John P. James and Oliver C. James, Nancy H. Sterling and

Mary J. Laird, all of Somerset County in the State of Maryland, whereas the said George R. James, W. Wesley James, John P. James and Oliver C. James, Nancy H. Sterling & Mary J. Laird, holds as tenants in common, by the death of their mother Charlotte James, a tract or parcel of land situated in Somerset County Maryland, and in Crisfield Election District, on the north east side of the County Road leading from the Crisfield Academy to Hays Hook Creek, which they have had carefully surveyed by Thomas Williams Surveyor for Somerset County, and an equal division of six parts made in a plat which is herewith annexed and is made a part of this deed to be recorded herewith, and the said George R. James and Lizzie U. James his wife, W. Wesley James and Margaret C. James his wife, John P. James and Mary S. James his wife, and Oliver C. James, Nancy H. Sterling and Noah J. Sterling her husband, & Mary J. Laird, have mutually agreed to make partition of the said land, and hold their respective share in severally. Now it is hereby witnessed

that the said George R. James & Lizzie his wife, W. Wesley James & Margaret his wife, John P. James & Mary his wife, & Oliver C. James, Nancy W. Sterling & Noah T. her husband, and Mary J. Laird, do by these presents make a perfect and absolute partition of the aforesaid parcel of land and improvements thereon, in manner following viz:

That the said W. Wesley James, his heirs and assigns shall have and enjoy to the only use of him, the said W. Wesley James, his heirs and assigns forever, Lot No. One on the said Plat hereto annexed as and for his full share of the said parcel of land;

And that the said John P. James, his heirs and assigns shall have and enjoy to the only use of him the said John P. James his heirs and assigns forever Lot No. Two, as described on said Plat, as and for his full share of the said parcel of land;

And the said Nancy W. Sterling her heirs and assigns shall have and enjoy to the only use of her the said Nancy W. Sterling her heirs and assigns forever, Lot No. Three, as described on said Plat as for her full share of the said land;

And the said George R. James, his heirs and assigns shall have and enjoy to the only use of him the said George R. James, his heirs and assigns forever, Lot No. Four, as described on said plat as and for his full share of the said land;

And the said Mary J. Laird her heirs and assigns shall have, and enjoy to the only use of her the said Mary J. Laird, her heirs and assigns forever Lot No. Five as described of said plat, as and for her full share of the said land;

And the said Oliver C. James, his heirs and assigns shall have and enjoy to the only use of him the said Oliver C. James, his heirs and assigns forever, Lot No. Six, as described on said plat as and for his full share of the said parcel of land;

And the said George R. James & Lizzie his wife, W. Wesley James & Margaret his wife John P. James & Mary his wife, & Oliver C. James, Nancy W. Sterling & Noah her husband and Mary J. Laird, in consideration of the premises, doth hereby grant each to the other their heirs and assigns, the aforesaid shares, and all the interest and estate, right and title of them the said heirs in fee simple. And the said George R. James & wife W. Wesley James & wife John P. James & wife and Oliver C. James

18.

Nancy H. Sterling & husband and Mary J. Laird doth covenant with each other their heirs and assigns, that they shall and may hereafter, have hold occupy possess and enjoy the aforesaid shares, free and discharged of all right, title interest or estate of either of them, and do jointly acknowledge the above allotment, Witness our hands and seals this twenty seventh day of May in the year eighteen hundred and eighty six (1886)

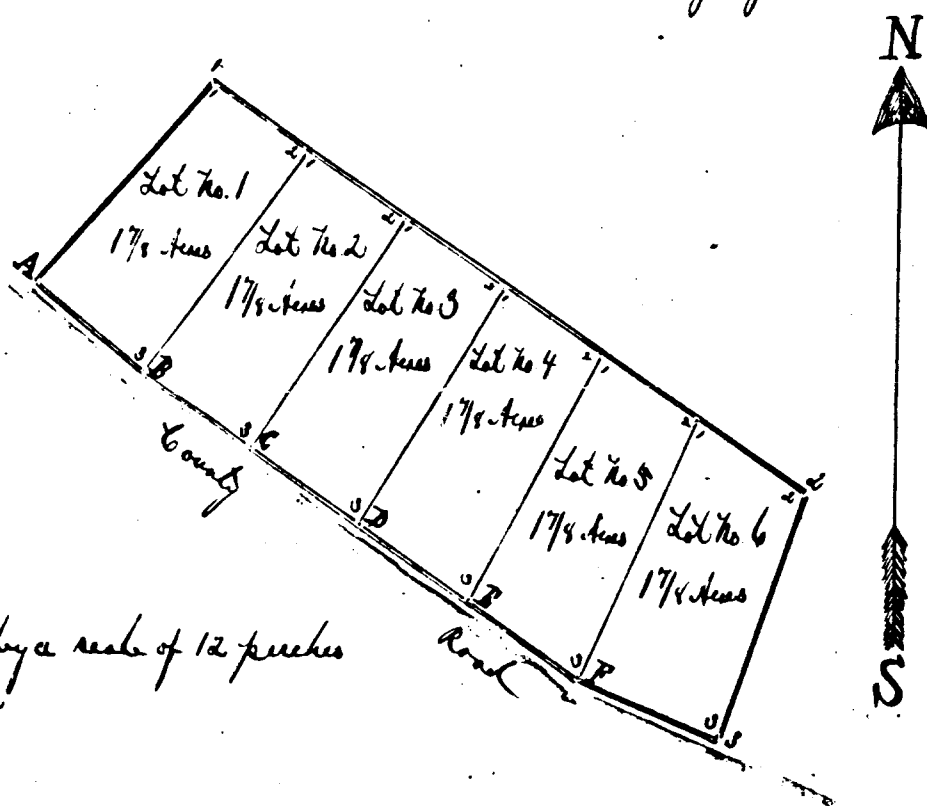
Test:  
O. S. Kearney

George R. James  
Lizzie U. James  
W. Wesley James  
Margaret <sup>his</sup> ~~wife~~ E. James  
John P. James  
Mary S. James  
Oliver E. James  
Nancy H. Sterling  
W. J. Sterling  
Mary <sup>his</sup> ~~wife~~ J. Laird

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State of Maryland, Somerset County Court: I hereby certify that on this 27<sup>th</sup> day of May in the year 1886, before me the undersigned a Justice of the Peace of the said State in and for the aforesaid County personally appeared George R. James and Lizzie U. James his wife, W. Wesley James and Margaret E. James his wife John P. James & Mary S. James his wife & Oliver E. James, Nancy H. Sterling, W. J. Sterling her husband and Mary J. Laird and did each acknowledge the aforesaid deed to be their respective act

Oliver S. Kearney J. P.



Laid down by a scale of 12 perches to an inch

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